

## Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors BC Branch Continuing Education Fall Webinar Series 2013

### Everything You Wanted To Know About Environmental Health Officers and Emergency Planning and Were Afraid To Ask September 26, 2013 from 15:20 - 15:50 (PDT)

After a short history of public health in British Columbia, I will trace what I know of Emergency Planning and Environmental Health Officers involvement focusing on specific situations such as SARS, Airport Quarantine Duties, E-COMM, White Powder, Pemberton Flood and the Cheakamus River Derailment.

#### **Dr. John Blatherwick, Chief Medical Health Officer (retired), Vancouver Coastal Health**



John Blatherwick was the Chief Medical Health Officer in Vancouver (and Vancouver Health Authority) from 1984 to 2007. In all, he served as a Medical Health Officer in British Columbia for 37 years and had a brief stint as the CEO of the short lived Burnaby Health Board. He is an Honorary Member of the Canadian Public Health Inspectors Institute.

John served in the Canadian Forces for 39 years retiring in 2000. He began his military career at age 16 with the Governor General's Foot Guards in Ottawa. He then joined the URTP (University Reserve Officer Training Program) with 107 RCAF University Squadron at the University of Alberta in 1963 and from 1967 to 1969 served as the Medical Officer for 418 (RCAF) Squadron. While interning in Calgary, he agreed to 'help out' with the local Medical Company and ended up being the Officer Commanding of the RCAMC unit while in Calgary. He again agreed to help out his senior resident at the Vancouver General Hospital for the summer in 1971 at HMCS Discovery and stayed for 29 years. John retired with the rank of Commander and was the Senior Naval Reserve Medical Advisor on retirement. He was Canada's representative to the NATO Reserve Medical Officers' Congress from 1989 to 1995 and received the sixth gold medal from this organization.

In 2006, he was named Honorary Colonel, 12 (Vancouver) Field Ambulance. This year marks 50 years in uniform for John.

For his services, he has been made a Member of the Order of Canada, a Member of the Order of British Columbia and a Commander of the Order of St. John. He received an honorary degree from UBC in 2008.

In retirement, he continues to write books (having published 22 books already), do some consulting work, travel with his wife of 46 years (the real doctor in the family) and play with his 9 grandchildren.